REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action dated May 17, 2006 drawn to the elected claims 15-21. As a result, the Applicants have amended claim 15 to more particularly point out and define the present invention. Claims have also been amended to use more succinct and clearer terms and expressions. The Summary of Invention on description page 3 has also been amended to reflect the amendments to independent claim 15.

Applicant submits that the all amendments to the application are to more clearly and succinctly recite and claim the present invention. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added by these amendments and all the amendments are supported by the original specification as a whole.

Favourable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The Examiner has rejected claims 15-18 and 21 as being anticipated by Law et al. Further the Examiner has rejected claims 19 and 20 as being obvious in light of Law. The Examiner is requested to reconsider the rejection in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

The Examiner has taken the position that Law et al. has all of the features shown in claims 15 through 21 either explicitly or the extra features would be obvious to one skilled in the art. However, it is respectfully submitted that Law et al. does not include all of the features of claim 15 as amended.

The system shown in Law et al. is a system for a completely different purpose than that

of the replicating device shown and claimed herein. Specifically the Law et al. device is for microcontact printing. The device uses a stamp to transfer a precursor to a substrate. The precursor functions either as autocatalytic sites for plating or as a mask for selectively preventing plating of the substrate. In contrast the device of the present invention is for replicating cell colonies. The challenges associated with these very different functions require devices that have different requirements. Specifically in regard to the microcontact printing application, the substrate is rigid. In contrast in the application herein wherein cell colonies are being replicated the agar plate is compliant. Further as discussed in the application as filed on page 7 lines 6 to 11 the thickness and the surface attitude of the agar may vary slightly from plate to plate. In use the system described herein uses replicating pads that are brought into contact with the substrate, such as an agar plate, and then pushed downwardly in order to pick up and deposit the cell colonies. Accordingly the device as claimed in claim 15 includes a positioning device for lifting, lowering and moving the gripper to a predetermined location and in addition the device includes a pusher so configured as to push the replicating pad downwardly whereby the replicating pad is pushed downwardly once it has been brought into contact with the substrate by the gripper. This is quite different from the device shown in Law et al. Specifically there is no reason why the Law device would want to push a released pad into a rigid substrate. Further there is nothing in Law that would teach, suggest or motivate a skilled person to modify the Law et al. device to include a pusher. Accordingly it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 15 and all claims dependent thereon are patentable over Law et al.

The non-elected claims 1 to 14 drawn to a replicating pad and 22 to 26 drawn to a method of replicating are being cancelled from the application. It is respectfully submitted that the Applicant retains the right to present these claims 1 to 14 and 22 to 26 in a divisional application.

It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance, which is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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